CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of transporting user-specific settings and information from a first PC to a second PC, comprising

identifying, on the first PC, user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files associated with the operating environment and a suite of user selected PC applications,

storing the said user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files into a portable storage device, which can then be connected to a second PC,

making the said user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files stored in the said portable storage device accessible by the user from the said second PC so the user can use the said second PC in the same way as if he/she is using the first PC, with the user's operating environment and applications configured in a familiar and useful way for the user,

making the said portable storage device the default storage device while the said

portable storage device is connected to the said second PC, so the information

created, received and modified by the user is automatically stored into the said

portable storage device, and

comparing, while the said portable storage device is connected to the said first PC,

the user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files in the portable

storage device with the user-selected settings, configuration information, and data

files in the permanent storage device of the said first PC, and if a setting,

configuration, or data file has been updated in one storage device, it will replace

the older version of the information in the other storage device, and if a new piece

of information is found in one storage device, it will be copied to the other storage

device.

2. A method of transporting user-specific settings and information from a first

PC to a second PC as recited in claim 1 wherein the user-specific settings include

without limitation the cosmetic appearance of the operating environment, choice

of cursor graphics, display settings, toolbar settings, menu layouts, and the other

user-configurable features of the operating system employed on the PC.

3. A method of transporting user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files from a first PC to a second PC as recited in claim 1 wherein the user-specific settings and configuration information are the user-configurable features of Microsoft Office, including without limitation default fonts, custom macros, page layouts, templates, and where the data files include without limitation work-in-process word processing documents, spreadsheets, presentations, databases, and reports.

4. A method of transporting user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files from a first PC to a second PC as recited in claim 1 wherein the user-specific settings and configuration information include without limitation the user's email account information, such as STMP and POP server settings, passwords, address book, email signature and stationery, and where the user's data files include without limitation sent mail, received mail, deleted mail, outbox, attachments, and draft emails.

5. An apparatus for transporting user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files from a first PC to a second PC, comprising a portable storage device on which is stored an application program which

identifies, on the first PC, user-specific settings and information associated with the operating environment and with a suite of user selected PC applications,

stores the said user-specific settings, configuration information and data files into the portable storage device, which can then be connected to a second PC,

makes the said user-specific settings and information stored in the portable storage device accessible by the user of the said second PC so the user can use the said second PC in the same way as if he/she is using the first PC,

makes the said portable storage device the default storage device, while the said portable storage device is connected to the said second PC, so the information created, received and modified by the user is automatically stored into the said portable storage device, and

compares, while the said portable storage device is connected to the said first PC, the user-specific settings, configuration information, and data files in the portable storage device with the user-selected settings, configuration information, and data files in the permanent storage device of the said first PC and if a setting, configuration, or data file has been updated in one storage device, it will replace the older version of the information in the other storage device, and if a new piece of information is found in one storage device, it will be copied to the other storage device,
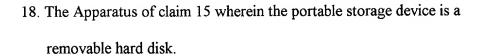
6. The Apparatus of claim 5 wherein the portable storage device is a flash

memory storage device.

7. The Apparatus of claim 5 wherein the portable storage device is a flash memory storage device with USB interface.

8. The Apparatus of claim 5 wherein the portable storage device is a removable hard disk.

9. The Apparatus of claim 8 wherein the removable hard disk uses an USB interface.

10. The Apparatus of claim 5 wherein the user-specific information includes information related to the configuration and use of Microsoft Office applications. .

11. The Apparatus of claim 10 wherein the portable storage device is a flash memory storage device.

12. The Apparatus of claim 10 wherein the portable storage device is a flash memory storage device with USB interface.

13. The Apparatus of claim 10 wherein the portable storage device is a removable hard disk.

14. The Apparatus of claim 13 wherein the removable hard disk uses USB interface.

15. The Apparatus of claim 5 wherein the user-specific settings and configuration information include without limitation the user's email account information, such as STMP and POP server settings, passwords, address book, email signature and stationery, and where the user's data files include without limitation sent mail, received mail, deleted mail, outbox, attachments, and draft emails.

16. The Apparatus of claim 15 wherein the portable storage device is a flash memory storage device.

17. The Apparatus of claim 15 wherein the portable storage device is a flash memory storage device with USB interface.

18. The Apparatus of claim 15 wherein the portable storage device is a
removable hard disk.

19. The Apparatus of claim 18 wherein the removable hard disk uses USB interface.